

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_

## Part 1: “The Hearth and the Salamander” Discussion Questions

1. Why does Montag grin with a “fierce grin” before and after he is fighting fires?
2. Describe Clarisse—how does she look and act? How is her face like a candle in the light it gives off? Give specific details.
3. What is the effect of Clarisse’s questions on Montag? Why do her questions have this effect?
4. Compare Montag’s wife, Mildred, with Clarisse. Are they alike in any way? How are they different?
5. What is Montag’s reaction when he discovers his wife has taken an overdose of sleeping pills? Why does he react this way? Does he love his wife?
6. What is the effect of the wall-sized TVs on Mildred? What kinds of programs are playing on them?
7. Why are Clarisse and Montag fascinated with each other? What do they find attractive; what do they find upsetting about each other?
8. Why does the mechanical hound growl and threaten Montag?
9. Clarisse says, “I haven’t any friends. That’s supposed to prove I’m abnormal”. Is Clarisse abnormal? What does she do that keeps people her own age from relating to her?
10. There is a list of a million forbidden books on the firehouse wall. What type of books are probably on this list, and why?
11. In a book in the house he has come to burn, Montag reads, “Time has fallen asleep in the afternoon sunshine”. How does this line affect him, and why?
12. Why does Beatty call books a “Tower of Babel”?
13. When Montag returns home after the house and book burning and the death of the woman, he makes “soft sounds.” What are these sounds, and why is he making them?
14. What does Mildred say when Montag tells her about the death of the old woman when they burned her books? What does Mildred’s response say about her? What has led Mildred to become the way she is?
15. According to Beatty, the numbers of different minorities were a problem because they caused controversy. How does the society try to eliminate controversy, and how effective are they in achieving this goal?
16. According to Beatty, what happened to books and magazines in the twentieth century? What forces contributed to this change?
17. How do firemen act as “...custodians of our peace of mind”?
18. According to Beatty, what is the effect on the human psyche of reading the classic books?
19. How does Mildred get rid of her frustrations and negative feelings? Does she resolve these negative feelings or just escape them? Explain your answer.
20. Montag tells Mildred, “I need you so much right now...”. What does he need? What is he seeking to attain with his wife?